{See Note at end.}

UNITY

CHURCH-DOOR PULPIT,

FOR

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

Series II. Chicago, March 1, 1886. No. 19.

JAMES MARTINEAU.

PASSAGES FROM HIS WRITINGS, SELECTED BY C. G. HOWLAND.

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James Martineau.

James Martineau was born of Huguenot ancestry, in Norwich, England, April 21, 1805. His father was a manufacturer and wine-merchant, unambitious but gentle and refined; his mother was a gifted lady of high character, who gave her son, and her almost equally distinguished daughter, Harriet, her own intellectual and moral enthusiasm. At ten, James was a pupil, undergoing a little boy's rough fate, in the ancient "Grammar school" of his native city,—mathematics his delight, but Latin and Greek the order of his day. The two years from fourteen to sixteen were the determining period of his life; for then the higher spiritual energies of a nature, always unusually active, were quickened under the personal influence of a famous teacher, Dr. Lant Carpenter, of Bristol, the best known Unitarian minister of his time. The work of a civil engineer, upon which his mind had been fixed, seemed far less attractive when he left this school. Still the plan was not abandoned, and an irksome year or two were next spent at the turning-lathe and work-bench. Then the good father yielded,—"You are courting poverty!" he told the boy,—and young Martineau entered Manchester New College as a divinity student. Precise, intense, almost ascetic, at his books,—is the memory he left behind him here.

On graduating in 1827, he returned to Bristol to assist Dr. Carpenter in the school; but the next year he was chosen junior minister of a church in Dublin,—a church nominally Presbyterian, really Unitarian, like so many other Unitarian churches in Great Britain. In those machine-shop days he had found a home in the family of Rev. Edward Higginson and must have done some other courting besides that his father prophesied; for, ordination over, he married the daughter, Helen Higginson, and a new home began. Born, bred, and married, then, amid English Unitarians. He soon became known in Dublin as a brilliant and fervid preacher, of a remarkable freedom of opinion. Four years passed and the senior colleague died. And *now* to remain was necessarily to accept the *regium donum*, an annual allowance made to Presbyterian ministers from the Crown: should he stay, or go? The injustice at that time involved in the relation of the two chief Protestant bodies to the Roman Catholics was too gross for him to be willing to personally benefit by it,—and he left Ireland. A church in Liverpool needing a colleague pastor invited him to come over to them. Mr. Wicksteed—in 1877—speaks as follows of his appearance: "Well does the writer remember, though it is forty-five years ago, how the circular staircase of the somewhat conspicuous pulpit was quietly ascended by a tall young man, thin, but of vigorous and muscular form, with dark hair, pale but not delicate complexion, a countenance full in repose of thought, and in animation of intelligence and enthusiasm; features belonging to no regular type or order of beauty, and yet leaving the impression of a very high kind of beauty; and a voice so sweet, and clear, and strong, without being in the least degree loud, that it conveyed all the inspiration of music without any of its art or intention. When this young man . . . rose to speak of the inspiration that was not in the letter but in the soul, and—for that time of day—boldly distinguished between the inspiration of Old Testament books and Old Testament heroes, he completed the conquest of his hearers."

Four years after going to Liverpool he gave a course of six lectures entitled "Rationale of Religious Inquiry", showing a much freer handling of some questions than the Unitarian public on either side of the ocean had been accustomed to see. But perhaps the chief event of his ministry in Liverpool was the part he took in the famous controversy of 1839. Thirteen clergymen of the English Church proposed to him and two other Unitarian ministers of the city,—Rev. John Hamilton Thom and Rev. Henry Giles,—a discussion of the main points of difference between their respective Churches. It is no disparagement to Channing, Worcester, Ware, Norton and others, our own champions in the same cause, to say that the Liverpool controversy, especially the part

taken by Martineau, has never been surpassed in vigorous and inspiring eloquence. Our American worthies never reached that "high tide of the Spirit" in what we now recognize as the only proper treatment of the Bible, which Martineau reached at the age of thirty-four.

In 1840 Mr. Martineau was appointed Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy and Political Economy in Manchester New College, while retaining charge of the Liverpool church.

His thought meanwhile had been going through great changes,—changes gradually involving the abandonment of many old positions in behalf of a more spiritual philosophy. "Everything he had written previously had become unsatisfactory. Courses of lectures, elaborately prepared, were laid upon the shelf forever; the familiar text-books could no longer be used, and many subjects had to be melted down again and recast in other moulds." Nor did his growth cease; for, after all this new insight, when his long cherished wish to visit Germany and see her scholars face to face was gratified in 1848–49, the rich resources of his mind were so enlarged, that the effect of his residence in Berlin and Dresden he himself describes as "a new intellectual birth."

Not long after his return, Manchester New College was removed to London, he still occupying the chair of Philosophy and making weekly trips to the city to deliver his lectures. But these frequent journeys so taxed his time and strength that in 1857, after a ministry of twenty-five years in Liverpool, he went to London to live. And there in addition to his college duties, and almost monthly writing for the *Reviews*, he preached for the next sixteen years to the congregation in Little Portland Street Chapel. It does not appear when he became Principal—*we* should say President—of the College; possibly in 1872, when he gave up the ministry of the chapel. But in April, 1885, on the eightieth anniversary of his birth, Dr. Martineau resigned his post in the institution in which he had been student, Professor, or Principal, so many years; the event being fittingly observed by his students and friends of two generations.

The English universities have never honored themselves by honoring James Martineau. But other countries have done what his own failed to do. In 1872 Harvard University conferred upon him the degree of LL.D., and in 1875 the University of Leyden gave him the degree of D.D. And at home, honors which lie beyond all official and ecclesiastic recognition are securely his. A Dissenter, he ranks the Bishops as England's strongest champion of the spiritual philosophy against all comers in the name of science physical,—science which, on its own grounds, no one welcomes more heartily than he. No English thinker in recent years has done so much to trace the great faiths and hopes of the race to their true sources in the soul of man. Man's soul is the key to the Soul of the universe: the "master-light of all our seeing" is the human Reason and Conscience and Affections, and by these we are to interpret the Infinite Mind from which they are derived.

He ranks the Bishops, we said. Stopford Brooke one day told James Freeman Clarke that, when he was thinking of leaving the Established Church, Dean Stanley begged him to remain, saying, "We need you, and men like you, to help us broaden the Church of England till it can hold all sincere Christians." Stopford Brooke replied, "Do you think, Dean, that in your time or in mine it will be broad enough to make Martineau Archbishop of Canterbury?" "I am afraid not", said Stanley. "Then it will not be broad enough for me", answered Brooke.

For ourselves, we call Martineau, now that Emerson has gone, the foremost prophet of our Liberal Faith. "Sacred eloquence", as it once was called, has hardly risen to a higher pitch than in his sermons, so penetrating in their insight, so radiant with imagination. *How* liberal the Faith is as it is in him, our selections hint. By his longings he is a National Church-man of a larger than the Stanley type; but, that Church not existing, loyalty to freedom has always kept him, as it kept Channing, in the sect. In 1868, with a few like-minded friends of various Churches, he planned a "Free Christian Union", "to relieve the Christian life from reliance on theological articles or external rites, to save it from conflict

with the knowledge and conscience of mankind, and bring it back to the essential conditions of harmony between God and man." The Union was a failure,—but a prophecy. "He has always declared that he did not belong, and would not belong, to any Church or sect that was understood to pledge itself to the reception of any fixed dogmas or any immutable opinion." And his influence exerted in this direction through his students and his books has done much to keep the Unitarians of England spiritually free. The books are still forthcoming, the work-hours are not over yet: still at the age of eighty he sits in England teaching faith and freedom.

The dates and facts in the sketch above are taken mainly from a Memoir by the late Rev. Charles Wicksteed, in No. 78 of "The National Portrait Gallery."

It is hoped that the following extracts, gleaned from Dr. Martineau's various writings—except the purely philosophical—will send readers to the books themselves; or at least prepare them for a possible volume of selections, whose welcome will be partly tested by this pamphlet.

For the general reader the three volumes of Sermons are better than anything else, namely,

"Endeavors after the Christian Life" (two vols. in one, $1.00).

"Hours of Thought on Sacred Things" (First series, $1.50. Second series, $2.00).

Some valuable essays, more critical in nature, are collected in a volume edited by W. R. Alger, called "Studies of Christianity".

"Materialism" ($1.25) contains two papers dealing with Prof. Tyndall,—"Religion as Affected by Modern Materialism", and "Modern Materialism: its Attitude towards Theology". Perhaps nothing better has been written to show that the religious positions are not displaced by natural science, and are involved in the very existence of the reason and conscience.

These five books can be ordered from our office.

The volume called "Miscellanies", edited by Thomas Starr King in 1852 (Crosby and Nichols, Boston), is doubtless out of print; and the two volumes called "Essays Philosophical and Theological" (W. V. Spencer, Boston, 1866 and 1868), it may perhaps be hard to find.

The other books referred to (the "Rationale of Religious Inquiry", the "Liverpool Lectures, or Unitarianism Defended", etc.), must be sought in English editions. The "Hymns of Praise and Prayer" is a very rich collection; and "Services IX and X", in a Book of "Common Prayer" widely used by Unitarian churches in England, prove that the sources of a noble liturgy lie in the fields of our Liberal Faith, some day to be utilized. "Types of Ethical Theory", Dr. Martineau's latest (1885), is also his largest, work; and now he is preparing for publication the next instalment of his lectures, on the Grounds and Truths of Religion. All along the years, the English Reviews (*London*, *Westminster*, *Prospective*, *National*, *Contemporary*, and others) and our own *Old and New*, have been enriched by articles from his hand.

Most of the references in the selections below are to the books named above, and will be understood by what is there said.

God.

Deep beyond Deep.

It is the essence and beginning o religion to feel that all our belief and speech respecting God is untrue, yet infinitely truer than any non-belief and silence; but the confession of our ignorance once made, we may proceed to use such poor thought and language as we find least unsuitable to so high a matter.

Endeavors, Sermon 2.

God, being infinite, can never be fully comprehended by our minds; whatever thought of him be there, his real nature must still transcend; there will yet be deep after deep beyond, within that light ineffable; and what we see, compared with what we do not see, will be as the raindrop to the firmament. Our conception of him can never *correspond* with the reality, so as to be without omission, dis-

proportion, or aberration; but can only *represent* the reality, and *stand for God* within our souls, till nobler thoughts arise and reveal themselves as his interpreters.

Endeavors, S. 23.

THE GREAT BELIEF, AND ITS COMFORT.

To me, I confess, it seems a very considerable thing, just to believe in God; — difficult indeed to avoid honestly, but not easy to accomplish worthily, and impossible to compass perfectly; — a thing not lightly to be professed, but rather humbly to be sought; not to be found at the end of any syllogism, but in the inmost fountains of purity and affection; — not the sudden gift of intellect, but to be earned by a loving and brave life. It is indeed the greatest thing allowed to mankind, — the germ of every lesser greatness: and he who can say, "I have faith in the Almighty", makes a higher boast than if he could declare, "The Mediterranean is my garden, and mine is every branch that waves upon its shores, from the cedars of Lebanon to the pine upon the Alps." How often in the stifling heat and press of life, when trivial cares rise with dry and dusty cloud to shut us in, do we wholly lose our place in the great calm of God, and fret as if there were no Infinite Reason embracing the vortex of the world! In loneliness and exhaustion, when the spirits are weak, and the crush of circumstance is strong; — when comrades rest and sleep, and we must toil and watch; — when the love of friends grows cold, and the warm light of youth is quenched, and the promise of years seems broken, and hope has but one chapter more; — how little do we think, as the boughs drip sadly with all this night-rain, that we lodge in Eden still, where the voice of the Lord God rustles in the trees, and bespeaks the blossom and the fruit that can only spring from tears!

Endeavors, S. 30.

FAMILIARS AND AGNOSTICS.

Those who tell me too much about God; who speak as if they knew his motive and his plan in every thing; who are never at a loss to name the reason of every structure and show the tender mercy of every event; who praise the cleverness of the Eternal economy and patronize it as a master-piece of forensic ingenuity; who carry themselves through the solemn glades of Providence with the springy step and jaunty air of a familiar; do but drive me by the very definiteness of their assurance into an indefinite agony of doubt, and impel me to cry, "Ask of me less, and I shall give you all." And, on the other hand, when I commune with those who have nothing to tell me about God; who treat the transient as the only real, and dismiss the Eternal as a negation and a dream; who pretend to lift the veil from Nature and show us that there is No One there; who see on the brow of heaven no trace of thought, and in the beauty of a saint only the working of a vital chemistry, and in the historical development of humanity a mere frondescence from the circulating sap of civilization; when, without once appealing to my faith, they account for everything *except this clinging faith itself;* — this little residual exception spoils all their work; and, in proportion to their success in bewildering my understanding, plunges me into the mood of enthusiasm as an escape from an empty despair. Trust is the natural attitude of the soul toward things diviner than herself; and cannot be pushed aside by the rude pretensions either of knowledge or of ignorance, without the loss of her balance and the subversion of her peace.

Hours, II., S. 1.

"ANTHROPOMORPHISM."

The existence of a Universal Will and the existence of Matter stand upon exactly the same basis; of certainty if you trust, of uncertainty if you distrust, the *principia* of your own reason. For my part, I cannot hesitate. Shall I be deterred by the reproach of "anthropomorphism"? If I am to see a ruling Power in the world, is it folly to prefer a man-like to a brute-like power, a seeing to a blind? The similitude to man means no more and goes no farther than the supremacy of intellectual insight and moral ends over every inferior alternative; and how it can be contemptible and childish to derive everything from the highest known order of power rather than the lowest, and to converse with Nature as embodied Thought,

instead of taking it as a dynamic engine, it is difficult to understand. Is it absurd to suppose mind transcending the human? or, if we do so, to make our own Reason the analogical base for intellect of wider sweep?

Modern Materialism.

"And every land a Palestine."

There in old Palestine, we think, the august voice broke for a moment the eternal silence. There, upon the mountains, was a murmur more than of the wind; and in the air a thunder grown articulate; and on the grass a fresher beauty; and in the lakes a docile listening look, as if conscious of a Presence higher than the night's. In this retrospect, it will not be denied, lies the ground of our prevalent religion; it contains the strength of our case; our assurance of divine things refers pre-eminently thither, and scarcely at all to any more recent age . . . . . For my own part, I venerate not less than others the birth-hour of Christianity, and the creative origin of worlds. But I do not believe that God lived then and there alone; or that if we could be transplanted to those times, we should find any such difference as would melt down the coldness of our hearts, or leave us more without excuse than we are now. There is no chronology in the evidence, any more than in the presence, of Deity. Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning — or rather the *un*beginning—of creation. The universe, open to the eye to-day, looks as it did a thousand years ago; and the morning hymn of Milton does but tell the beauty with which our own familiar sun dressed the earliest fields and gardens of the world. We see what all our fathers saw. And if we cannot find God in your house and mine, upon the roadside or the margin of the sea; in the bursting seed or opening flower; in the day-duty and the night-musing; in the genial laugh and secret grief; in the procession of life, ever entering afresh and solemnly passing by and dropping off; I do not think we should discern him any more on the grass of Eden, or beneath the moonlight of Gethsemane. Depend upon it, it is not the want of greater miracles, but of the soul to perceive such as are allowed us still, that makes us push all the sanctities into the far spaces we cannot reach. The devout feel that wherever God's hand is, *there* is miracle; and it is simply an indevoutness which imagines that only where miracle is, can there be the real hand of God. The customs of Heaven ought surely to be more sacred in our eyes than its anomalies; the dear old ways, of which the Most High is never tired, than the strange things which he does not love well enough ever to repeat. And he who will but discern beneath the sun, as he rises any morning, the supporting finger of the Almighty, may recover the sweet and reverent surprise with which Adam gazed on the first dawn in Paradise. It is no outward change, no shifting in time or place; but only the loving meditation of the pure in heart, that can re-awaken the Eternal from the sleep within our souls; that can render him a reality again, and vindicate for him once more his ancient name of "The Living God".

Endeavors, S. 30.

Nature's Poem.

He transcends the universe, no doubt,—goes out beyond it, and includes in his Mind a thousand possible universes besides; but also he occupies the universe, and makes it plastic to his thought and articulate to his affection . . . . That God is a Spirit has not hindered him from shaping the vault of night and hanging it with stars; or from tinting the tender blue of day; or from spreading the sheet of sea and streaking it with green and gold; or from poising the summer clouds to fling the chase of purple shadows on the hills; or from shining through the cool light of the spring woods; or from dwelling in our humanity to touch it with many a grace and repeat in it the image of his pity and his truth; or from resting with the Man of Sorrows as the symbol of his purity and holy love. These are the works of his Creativeness, — the appeal of his beauty to our hearts, — the mighty poem he improvises through all the rhythm of the universe.

Hours, II., S. 23.

Two Ways of the Spirit. In Nature's Laws—in the Free Soul.

All the power that impregnates this vast field (of Nature) is simply and entirely *his*. Science may call it by grand foreign names, and tell you of refraction and polarity, electricity and gravitation; but in the dialect of reality it is still and only *God*. The frost that binds the waters, and the warmth that sets them free; the wind that drives the storm to-day, and to-morrow lies hushed to see the snow-flake balance as it falls; the light that glitters on the leaves and melts upon the colored clouds; the life of growing field-flowers, and the sweep of flying worlds; all are but the out-comings of his presence, and the stirring of his will. Throughout the range of the physical creation so *methodic* is that will, that we learn to know and anticipate its ways, and call them *laws of Nature:* no impulse ever disturbs them; no affection ever suspends them; no prayer ever arrests them; they proceed from age to age, through life and death, in their punctual and passionless career; as though they came from the organic nature, rather than the dear heart of God. . . .

But he has not entirely immersed himself, neither has he wholly imprisoned us, in the realm of nature and the rules of mechanical causation. Deep behind all this, he has reserved in his own being, and has permitted in ours, a spirit greater than nature, the cause of causes, the legislator of law; and here it is, between the free mind in him and the free mind in us, —tone springing up in answer to tone, flame bursting out in the focus of flame,— that direct communion and effectual sympathy are left open to us. In all internal things belonging to the higher history of our spirits, in the strife of conscience, the humiliations of contrite memory; in the upward spring of devout hope, and the despondency of saddened enthusiasm; in the deep burning of aspiration unquenchable by the damping cloud or sorrowing rain; indeed, through all the mysteries known to faithful hearts,—the strength to take again their broken vows; the sudden break of unearned hopes, like a sun-burst through a threatening sky; the unexpected gleam again, amid a hard experience, of the child's insight of purity and trust; we may meet his immediate eye, feel the mingling movements of his pity with our affection, and know the gentle voice, "Faint not, thou poor child, here is a hand to help thy way."

Thus from the two parts of the Divine rule we are exposed to a double discipline, blending submission with aspiration, the severe with the tender, the unbending with the free.

Hours II., S. 16.

"Thou in me, and I in thee."

I pretend not to draw the untraceable line that separates his being from ours. The decisions of the Will, doubtless, are our own, and constitute the proper sphere of our personal agency. But in a region higher than the Will — the realm of spontaneous thought and emotion — there is scope enough for his abode with us! Whatever is most deep within us is the reflection of himself. All our better love and higher aspirations are the answering movements of our nature in harmonious obedience to his Spirit. Whatever dawn of blessed sanctity, and wakening of purer perceptions, opens on our consciousness, are the sweet touch of his morning light within us. His inspiration is perennial; and he never ceases to work within us if we consent to will and to do his good pleasure. He befriends our moral efforts; encourages us to maintain our resolute fidelity and truth; accepts our co-operation with his designs against all evil; and reveals to us many things far too fair and deep for language to express. But he is expelled by the least unfaithfulness. . . . Finding a Holy of Holies within us, we need not curiously ask whether its secret voices are of ourselves or the Father. Christ felt how, within the deeps of our spiritual nature, the personalities of Heaven and earth might become entwined together and indissolubly blended: "Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, and they also one in us." And so the Holy Spirit within us, the spirit of Christ and the spirit of God, are, after all, but one; — a blessed Trinity, our part in which gives to our souls a dignity most humbling yet august.

Endeavors, S. 27.

THE TWILIGHT HOUR.

As if in acknowledgment of the mystery of God, as with an instinctive feeling that his being is the meeting-place of light and shade, and that in approaching him we must stand on the confines between the seen and the unseen, all nations and all faiths of cultivated men have chosen the *twilight* hour, morning and evening, for their devotion; and so it has happened that, all round the earth, on the bordering circle between the darkness and the day, a zone of worshippers has been ever spread, looking forth for the Almighty Tenant of space, one half toward the East, brilliant with dawn, the other into the hemisphere of night descending on the West. The veil of shadow, as it shifts, has glanced upon adoring souls, and by its touch cast down a fresh multitude to kneel; and as they have gazed into opposite regions for their God, they have virtually owned his presence "besetting them behind and before".

Endeavors, S. 2.

THE SABBATH SPECTACLE OF THE WORLD.

Surely it is a glorious thing to call up, while we worship here, the wide image of Christendom this day. Turn your thoughts away from the noisy discord of sects; believe nothing of their mutual slanders; forgive the occasional weakness of superstition; and be not angry with the narrow vision of earnest conviction, that can see nothing but its own truth; and far beneath the superficial divisions created by the intellect, see, in the Sabbath spectacle of the world, evidence of a deep and wide-spread union of hearts. Could we be lifted up above this sphere, and look down as it rolls beneath this day's sun, and catch its murmurs as they rise, should we not behold land after land turned into a Christian shrine? The dawn, that summons mortals from their sleep, bears them to-day a new and sacred message; the sunbeam touches the gates of ten thousand temples, and they burst open to receive the record of countless aspirations; the morning shoots across the desert atmosphere of a weary world, strikes on the stony form of giant humanity, and brings out tones of celestial music. In how many tongues, by what various voices, with what measureless intensity of love, is the name of Christ breathed forth to-day! What cries of penitence, what accents of trust, what plaints of earnest desire, pass away to God! What an awful array of faces that gaze forth into immortality with various looks of terror or of love! The vows and prayers whose millions crowd the gates of mercy no recording angel could tell, but only the infinite memory of God. Of how glorious a church, then, are we members when we kneel within this place! in how solemn an act do we take our part! with how sublime a brotherhood do we own our fellowship!

Endeavors, S. 13.

"TO THIS HOUSE WE COME."

To this house we come, my friends, drawn, not by arbitrary command which we fear to disobey; not by self-interest, temporal or spiritual, which we deem it prudent to consult; not, I trust, from the dead conventionalism that brings the body and leaves the soul; but by a common quest of some holy spirit to penetrate and purify our life; by a common desire to quit its hot and level dust, and from its upland slopes of contemplation inhale the serenity of God; by the secret sadness of sin that can delay its confessions and bear its earthliness no more; by the deep though dim consciousness, that the passing weeks do not leave us where they find us, but plant us within nearer distance, and give us a more intimate view, of that fathomless eternity, wherein so many dear and mortal things have dropped from our imploring eyes.

Endeavors, S. 13.

Reverence the holy custom, shelter from heedless slight the living impulse, that week by week calls you hither to remember, to aspire, to pray. Bring only the pure, lowly, childlike heart, tender to everything except the sins you must confess,—full of hope for the world and trust in God; spread out an eager and a gentle spirit for the dropping of fruitful seeds from Holy Writ and saintly hymn; freshen the fading vow of self-sacrificing

love; and your worship here will not only resemble *his* who, in fullness of the Spirit, "went, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day", but prepare for a higher communion, where "your life is hid with him in God".

Hours, I., S. 1.

"WITH ALL THE MARTYRS' NOBLE HOST."

Into the worship that brings us together here has flowed the lofty will of Ambrose, the passion of Augustine, the sanctity of St. Francis, the sweetness of Tauler, the nobleness of Milton, and the fervors of countless holy men. What voice shall serve us to breathe it all? What light shall worthily show us all the meaning of that distant Calvary, through the august perspective of such a Christendom, with its lines of martyrs and spirits of the saints? Their solemn shadows lie around us here; their tender and majestic voices steal into the chorus of our hymn; and should surely lift both the outer music of our temple and the inner melody of our hearts towards the height of their divine strain, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are all thy ways, O Thou King of Saints!"

Hours, II., S. 23.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is the soul's act in laying itself consciously open at the feet of God; it is the gush of tenderness with which the spirit pours forth its burning emotions of veneration and love; it is the joy, or the agony, or the shame of placing the mind as it is, in contact with the great Parent mind, that its sins may become clearer, its wants more craving, that its life may be quickened, and its sympathies refreshed.

Miscellanies, 41.

What is the doctrine, what the practice, prevailing among us, in reference to Prayer? . . . I would be understood to speak of *a direct and mutual communion of spirit with spirit* between ourselves and God, in which he receives our affection and gives a responsive breathing of his inspiration. . . Unless something better can be urged against the doctrine of prayer than the commonplaces about the fixity of natural laws, I must profess I know of nothing in the constitution of this universe at all at variance with our natural faith in a personal intercourse with God, in his openness to our appeal, and our susceptibility to his Spirit.

Human nature, ever since it became capable of reflecting on itself, has been recognized as a compound of two elements, represented respectively by the body and the soul. We present the theatre on which the physical and the spiritual meet. It matters not that the separating boundary is difficult to draw: nature delights in melting colors rather than in rigid lines. . . . The broad facts of our own consciousness make us aware that the physical in us is related to the spiritual as the passive to the active, as the resistance to the power that wields it, as the sensitive to the spontaneous. By the one, we lie exposed to the objects in the world; by the other, we go out upon them. By the one, we see and hear and feel; by the other, we know, we love, we will, and we aspire. . . . The physical is governed from without; the spiritual can govern itself. . . . The former is under necessity; the latter is free. . . .

Now in God also we find the same twofold being as in ourselves. Not indeed that he is subject, as we are, to any rule higher than his own. . . . He has *bound himself* by fast resolves, which he carries out from the centre of the earth along every radius that penetrates the stars. . . God's rule of action in nature we have every reason to regard as unalterable: established as an inflexible and faithful basis of expectation; and so far embodying the essential conditions of intellectual and moral life; and for that reason, not open to perpetual variation on the suggestion of occasional moral contingencies. . . . God, however, is infinite, . . . and the laws of nature do not *exhaust* his agency. There is a boundless residue of disengaged faculty beyond. . . . Behind and amid all these punctualities of law abides, in infinite remainder, the living and unpledged spirit of God. . . . Here he has made no rule but the everlasting rule of holiness, and given no pledge but the pledge of inextinguishable love. . . .

But where, you will say, can we find the action of God's disengaged Spirit? In

what sphere do we escape the pressure of inexorable law? Show us the place in which he renounces this tie, and acts freshly on the momentary need? The challenge almost brings its own reply. In man there are two elements, the physical and the spiritual: in God there are two agencies, also physical and spiritual. It follows of itself that what is physical in us is subjected to what comes physically from him; while that which is spiritual in us is open to communication from what lives spiritually in him. . . . In all external things we must expect to live subject to nature's law. . . . Thus far he deals with us only as with *things*. . . . But deep behind this realm of nature he has reserved in his own being, and has permitted in ours, a spirit greater than nature, the cause of causes, the legislator of law; and here it is between the free mind in him and the free mind in us, . . that direct communion and effectual sympathy are left open to us. . . .

[*Read here the passage on page 7,*
"Two Ways of the Spirit."]

We must accommodate ourselves to the stern mechanism of God's natural and unmoral laws; and then he will succor us, not by *altering them*, but by *inspiring us*,—by lifting us to bear their burthen,—by throwing open to us the almightiness of his companionship and the shelter of his love. . . . True, the prophets and devout of all times and nations have often overstrained the power of prayer; they have supposed that it might even arrest the career of physical law, stop the hurricane, stay the plague, bring down the rain. But what of this? The first natural idea of the Divine government is that it is *all free*, the spontaneous outpouring of a Mind exempt from rules. . . . The artificial reaction from this belief is in the idea that the Divine government is *all necessary*, the pledged evolution of an eternal mechanism. . . . I call this doctrine a "superstition", because it is an arbitrary extension, not on evidence, but on the suggestion of a wish or fear, of a rule found or inferred in outward nature, to the strongly contrasted spiritual realm, which, beyond its first physical margin, gives it no support. . . .

This principle, by resolving all devotion into communion between spirit and spirit, and surrendering the field of nature to necessary law, relinquishes supplication for temporal things and limits the object of prayer to inward conditions of the soul. Yet this inference is subject to qualifications. . . . Petitions for purely physical events must be condemned as at variance with the known method of Providential rule. But a large proportion of temporal events are not dealt out to us from the mere physical elements; they come to us with a mixed origin, from the natural world indeed, yet through the lines of human life, and as affected by the human will. . . . Wherever elements of character enter the result, so that it will differ according to the moral agent's attitude of mind, it is plainly not beyond the reach of a purely spiritual influence to modify a temporal event. . . . Wherever the living contact between the human spirit and the Divine can set in operation our very considerable control over the combinations and processes of the natural world, there is still left a scope, practically indefinite, for prayer that the bitter cup of outward suffering may pass away; only never without the trustful relapse, "Not my will, but thine, be done".

For the rest, he that has once found "the secret place of the Most High" soon ceases to press, or indeed to trust, his own desires; and the more he is lifted into the freedom of the spirit, so much the less resists the necessity of the divine natural order. He is at home in both spheres; and is reconciled to each by the presence of the other. The fixed administration of God supplies to life its subduing and chastening element, its occasions of speechless submission and quiet awe. His free relation to the responsible soul opens the true field for devotion, the place of lonely audience, the living interchange, mind with mind, where the Infinite Father individualizes himself for us, takes up our sighs, and breathes himself into our affectionate will. Of such relation there can be no other and higher evidence than that of conscious experience; and this appropriate and only possible proof is so amply furnished in the records and literature of the religious life of every age, that even

from those to whom it may be personally foreign it is not without reasonable claims to respect.

——— *Hours, II., S.* 16.

PRAYERS.

O God, unsearchable: why are we so blind to thee, who besettest us behind and before? In the daylight of thy constant mercy, we scarcely lift our eye to the infinite heaven whence it flows. Now screen us with thy hand, O Lord, that we may not wait for the night of sorrow, but here, under the shade of holy thought, may learn in what a world we live. Here let us rest from the weary shows of life, and converse with thee, the Only True. And though thou receivest higher praise than ours, from natures that know thee more and serve thee better, yet tune our spirits and join our voices with theirs; and unite us with the faithful and saintly, there and here, in one light of faith, one beauty of holiness, one repose on thee. *Amen.*

Prayer for Christian Worship, Service X.

O God, who art, and wast, and art to come, before whose face the generations rise and pass away; age after age the living seek thee, and find that of thy faithfulness there is no end. Our fathers in their pilgrimage walked by thy guidance, and rested on thy compassion; still to their children be thou the cloud by day, the fire by night. Where but in thee have we a covert from the storm or shadow from the heat of life? In our manifold temptations, thou alone knowest and art ever nigh: in sorrow, thy pity revives the fainting soul: in our prosperity and ease it is thy Spirit only that can wean us from our pride and keep us low. Take now the veil from every heart, and join us in one communion with thy prophets and saints who have trusted in thee and were not ashamed. Not of our worthiness, but of thy tender mercy, hear our prayer. *Amen.*

Prayer for Christian Worship, Service IX.

RELIGION.

THE FUNDAMENTAL FAITH, THAT IN HUMAN FACULTIES.

Faith in our own faculties, as God has given them, is at the very basis of all knowledge and belief, on things human or divine;—an act of primitive religion, so inevitable that without it scepticism itself cannot even begin, but wanders about through the inane, in fruitless search for a point on which to hang its first sophistic thread. And each one of our own natural powers is to be implicitly trusted within its own sphere, and not beyond it; the senses, as reporters of the outward world; the understanding, in the ascertainment of laws and the interpretation of nature; the reason and conscience, in the ordering of life, the discernment of God, and the following of religion. Whoever tries to shake their authority, as the ultimate appeal in their several concerns, though he may think himself a saint, is in fact an infidel. Whoever pretends that any thing can be above them,—be it a book or a church,—is secretly cutting up all belief by the roots. Whoever tells me that prophet or apostle set himself above them, and contradicted, instead of reverently interpreting and rendering audible, the whispers of the highest soul, is chargeable with fixing on the messengers of God the sure sign of imposture or of wildness. To tell me, with warnings against my erring faculties, that a thing is divine which offends my devoutest perception of the true and holy;—as well might you persuade me to admire the sweetness of a discord by abusing my sense of hearing, or to prefer a signboard to a Raphael by enumerating optical illusions and preaching on the imperfections of sight. . . . Turn the matter as we may, it will appear that the fullest, most unqualified admission of a moral and rational nature in man, whose decisions no external power can overrule, and which constitutes God's ever open court for trying the claims of Scripture and prophecy, no less than of philosophy, is the prime requisite of all devout faith; without which, duty loses its sacredness, revelation its significance, and God himself his authority.

Endeavors, S. 40.

THE SUPREME FAITH, THAT OF CONSCIENCE.

We have faith in the moral perceptions of man. The conscience with which he is endowed enables him to appreciate the dis-

tinction between right and wrong, to understand the meaning of *ought* and *ought not;* to love and revere whatever is great and excellent in character, to abhor the mean and base; and to feel that in the contrast between these we have the highest order of differences by which mind can be separated from mind. . . . That Justice, Mercy, and Truth are good and venerable, is no matter of doubtful opinion in which peradventure an error may be hid. . . . The modes in which we think of moral qualities are not terrestrial peculiarities of idea, like foreign prejudices; the terms in which we speak of them are not untranslatable provincial idioms, vulgarities of our planetary dialect, but are familiar, like the symbols of a divine science, to every tribe of souls, belonging to the language of the universe, and standing defined in the vocabulary of God. . . . Whatever else may move, here, as in creation's centre of gravity, we take our everlasting stand. Whatever else be doubtful, these are to be simply trusted. The force of certainty by which nature and God give them to the conscience exceeds any by which, either through the understanding or through any supernatural communication, they might *seem* to be drawn away. No revelation could persuade me that what I revere as just, and good, and holy, is *not venerable*, any more than it could convince me that the midnight heavens are not sublime. . . .

We have faith in the moral perfection of God. . . . No system of religion which contradicts it can be admitted as credible *on any terms*. . . . Having faith in the absolute perfection of our Creator, we dare ascribe to him nothing which revolts the secret conscience he has given us. It is no more possible that what would be evil in man should be good in God, than that a circle on earth should be a square in heaven. . . . If the Scriptures taught respecting him anything unjust or unholy, we should not accept *it* but reject *them*.

Studies, pp. 179–199.

REVERENCE AND ITS OBJECT.

Reverence for character above us, at whatever height it may be, is the posture of a *religious* nature; and the aspiration it sustains, the trust it fosters, the self-sacrifice it renders possible and light, fling into our life its fairest colors and tincture it all with sacredness. Let this devoutness of heart be free as you will: let it go everywhere and touch everything: the finite also is open to it as well as the infinite; and the minor pieties are not to retire or renounce their name before the greater. But then, for both there is this indispensable condition: that the inward homage, whatever its direction, shall alight upon a *real object*, and not lose itself in the dilution of an endless search.

Ideal Substitutes for God.

Be assured, all visible greatness of mind grows in looking at an invisible that is greater. And since it is inconceivable that what is most sublime in humanity should spring from vision of a thing that is not, that what is most real and commanding with us should come of stretching the soul into the unreal and empty, that historic durability should be the gift of spectral fancies, we must hold these devout natures to be at one with everlasting Fact,—to feel truly that the august forms of Justice and Holiness are at home in heaven, the object there of clearer insight and more perfect veneration.

Studies, p. xiii.

Religion, in its ultimate essence, is a sentiment of Reverence for a Higher than ourselves. Higher than ourselves, however, none can be, that have not what is most august among our endowments; none, therefore, by reason of size, of strength, of duration; none simply by beauty or by skill, none even by largeness of discerning thought, but only by free and realizing preference of the most Just and Good. A Being of living Will can alone be nobler than myself, lift me above the level of my actual mind by looking at my latent nature, and emancipate me into the captivity of worship. In other words, reverence attaches itself exclusively to a *Person;* it cannot direct itself on what is *im*personal,—on physical facts, on unconscious laws, on necessary forces, on inanimate objects and their relations, on space, though it be infinite, on duration though it be eternal. These all, even when they

rule us, are *lower* than ourselves; they may evade our knowledge, defy our power, overwhelm our imagination, but never rise to be our equals, or conspire to furnish even the symbol of our God.

Studies, p. 368.

THE CHILDREN'S MEDIATOR.

The lessons of devotion are, for a long time, adopted passively, with listening faith; the great ideas dwindling, as they fall from the teacher's lips, to the dimensions of the infant mind receiving them. When the mother calls her children to her knees to speak to them of God, she is *herself* the greatest object in their affections. It is by her power over them that God becomes Venerable; by the purity of her eye that he becomes Holy; by the silence of the hour that he becomes Awful; by the tenderness of her tones that he becomes Dear. That the parents bend, with lowly look and serene result, before some invisible Presence, is the first and sufficient hint to the heart's latent faith; which therefore blends awhile with the domestic sympathies, simply mingling with them an element of mystery, and imparting to them a deeper and less earthy coloring.

Endeavors, S. 1.

A YOUNG SOUL.

How deplorable! a young soul without wonder, without reverence, without tenderness, without inspiration; with superficial mirth, and deep indifference; standing on the threshold of life's awful temple, with easy smile, without uncovered head, or bended knee, or breathless listening! Is that the time, do you say, for enjoyment? Yes;—and for enthusiasm, for conviction, for depth of affection, and devotedness of will; and if there be no tints of heaven in that morning haze of life, it will be vain to seek them in the staring light of the later noon.

Endeavors, S. 427.

WHAT DO YOU REALLY REVERE?

Whoever can so look into my heart as to tell *whether there is any thing which I revere*, and if there be, *what thing* it is; he may read me through and through, and there is no darkness wherein I may hide myself. This is the master-key to the whole moral nature; what does a man secretly admire and worship? What haunts him with the deepest wonder? What fills him with most earnest aspiration? What should we overhear in the soliloquies of his unguarded mind? This it is which, in the truth of things, constitutes his *religion*;—this, which determines his precise place in the scale of spiritual ranks;—this, which allies him to hell or heaven;—this, which makes him the outcast or the accepted of the moral sentiments of the Holiest.

Endeavors, S. 23.

THE SLATTERN IN HIS PRAYERS.

It is quite impossible that an idle, floating spirit can ever look up with clear eye to God; spreading its miserable anarchy before the symmetry of the creative Mind; in the midst of a disorderly being, that has neither centre nor circumference, kneeling beneath the glorious sky, that everywhere has both; and for a life that is *all* failure, turning to the Lord of the silent stars, of whose punctual thought it is, that "not one faileth". The heavens, with their everlasting faithfulness, look down on no sadder contradiction than the sluggard and the slattern in their prayers.

THE TESTING QUESTIONS.

Where then is *our* God? You say, He is *everywhere:* then show me *anywhere* that you have met him. You declare him everlasting: then tell me *any moment* that he has been with you. You believe him ready to succor them that are tempted, and to lift those that are bowed down: then in what passionate hour did you subside into his calm grace? In what sorrow lose yourself in his "more exceeding" joy? These are the testing questions by which we may learn whether we too have raised our altar to an "unknown God" and pay the worship of the blind; or whether we commune with him "in whom we live, and move, and have our being".

INTO THE SILENCE.

God was no nearer to Christ on Tabor or in Gethsemane than to us this day and every day. . . . Is it not promised forever to the pure in heart that they

shall see him? Let any true man go into silence; strip himself of all pretense, and selfishness, and sensuality, and sluggishness of soul; lift off thought after thought, passion after passion, till he reaches the inmost deep of all; remember how short a time and he was not; how short a time again and he will not be here; open his window and look upon the night; how still its breath, how solemn its march, how deep its perspective, how ancient its forms of light; and think how little he knows except the perpetuity of God, and the mysteriousness of life;—and it will be strange if he does not feel the Eternal Presence as close upon his soul as the breeze upon his brow; . . . . if the true proportions and the genuine spirit of life do not open on his heart with infinite clearness, and show him the littleness of his temptations and the grandeur of his trust. He is ashamed to have found weariness in toil so light, and tears where there was no trial to the brave. He discovers with astonishment how small the dust that has blinded him, and from the height of a quiet and holy love looks down with incredulous sorrow on the jealousies and fears and irritations that have vexed his life. A mighty wind of Resolution sets in strong upon him, and freshens the whole atmosphere of his soul; sweeping down before it the light flakes of difficulty, till they vanish like snow upon the sea. He is imprisoned no more in a small compartment of time, but belongs to an eternity which is now and here. The isolation of his separate spirit passes away; and with the countless multitude of souls akin to God, he is but as a wave of his unbounded deep. He is at one with Heaven, and hath found the secret place of the Almighty.

Endeavors, S. 17.

THE ALPS WITHIN.

While you remain in the dust, reason as you may, it *will* annoy you: and there is no help for it, but to retire into a higher and grassier region, where the sultry road is visible from afar. We must go in contemplation *out of life*, ere we can see how its troubles subside, and are lost, like evanescent waves in the deeps of eternity and the immensity of God. A mind that can make this migration from the scene by which it is surrounded, is removed from all vain strife of will, and gains its tranquillity without an effort: feels no difficulty in being gentle and serene, but rather wonders that it could ever be tempted from its pure repose. How welcome would it often be to many a child of anxiety and toil, to be suddenly transferred from the heat and din of the city, the restlessness and worry of the mart, to the midnight garden on the mountain top! And like refreshment does a high faith, with its infinite prospects ever open to the heart, afford to the worn and weary; no laborious travels are needed for the devout mind; for it carries within it Alpine heights and starlit skies, which it may reach at a moment's thought, and feel at once the loneliness of nature and the magnificence of God.

Endeavors, S. 3.

STEADIED IN GOD.

This I do profoundly believe; that all finite loves are only *half-born*, wandering in a poor twilight, unknowing of their peace and power, till they lie within the encompassing and glorifying love of God. . . . . Where there is no quieting perception of a Divine Presence in the world, the sense of justice, the indignation at wrong, sinks into a revolutionary passion, fantastic in its speech and reckless in its ways, instead of a grave and considerate obedience to the eternal Law of God. All human enthusiasms, permitted to become ultimate and disown their divine subordination, invariably degenerate into restlessness and precipitation; fret and chafe impatiently against the obstacles that stay their course; and where they cannot win a happy way, waste and corrode themselves with inner scorns and vexations. . . . No sublimer spectacle do I know on earth, than the faculties of a grand and passionate nature, as in a Socrates or a Paul, falling into stillness before the face of God, and by the awful light of his countenance turned from a stormy nobleness into a loving and working power. It is a spectacle which emerges painfully and rarely from the battle of the will, spontaneously and often from the repose of faith.

Hours, I., S. 25.

KNOWLEDGE VANISHES.—POETRY, WORSHIP, FAITH ABIDE.

Never do we more completely deceive ourselves, than when we fancy that the work of the understanding is durable, while that of our richer genius is evanescent; that what we know is solid, what we aspire after and adore in thought is unsubstantial; that the achievements of physical discovery are the fixed products of time, while the visions of poetry are but the adornments of a passing age. How plainly does historical experience contradict this estimate! Of no nation, of no period, within the limits of known and transmitted civilization, does the most advanced science remain true for us; while of none has the genuine poetry vanished. Thales and Archimedes have been obsolete for centuries; while old Homer is fresh as ever, and delights the modern school-boy only less than he did the Greek hero. The acuteness of the Athenian intellect has left us no account of any law of nature, which the greatest masters of ancient knowledge deciphered as we do now; but the stories of Job and the rapt song of Isaiah will never be worn out, while a human soul is on the earth, and the divine heaven above it. The readings of philosophy, the creeds of theology, are alike transitory; but the discernment of sacred truth and beauty is perpetual and without essential change. Never knowing but *in part*, we find all our knowledge successively vanishing away; but in adoring the grandeur, feeling the solemnity, and aspiring to the perfection of the whole, the inspirations of genius and the yearnings of faith are consentaneous and eternal.

Endeavors, S. 42.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

Science discloses the Method of the world, but not its cause: Religion its Cause, but not its method: and there is no conflict between them, except when either forgets its ignorance of what the other alone can know. When, for instance, the old book of Genesis announces God as the Cause of all, it speaks the language of pure Religion, which cannot be traversed or met, except behind the field of mere phenomena. When it relates that it took six days to make the universe, and recounts what was done on each, . . . it essays the language of science, and is open to correction from every fresh reading of the order and method of the world.

Essays, Phil. and Theol., I., p. 178.

An apprehension has become widely spread that Natural History and Science are destined to give the *coup de grace* to all theology, and discharge the religious phenomena from human life; that churches and their symbols must disappear like the witches' chamber and the astrologists' tower; and that, as everything above our nature is dark and void, those who affect to lift it lead it nowhither, and must take themselves away as "blind leaders of the blind". Whether this apprehension is well founded or not is a very grave question for society in many relations; and is emphatically urgent for those who educate men as spiritual guides to others, and who can invest them with no directing power except the native force of a mind at one with the truth of things and a heart of quickened sympathies. Hitherto, they have been trained under the assumptions that *the Universe which includes us and folds us round is the Life-dwelling of an Eternal Mind; that the World of our abode is the scene of a Moral Government incipient but not yet complete; and that the upper zones of Human Affection, above the clouds of self and passion, take us into the sphere of a Divine Communion.* Into this over-arching scene it is that growing thought and enthusiasm have expanded to catch their light and fire. And if "the new faith" is to carry in it the contradictories of these positions—if it leaves us to make what we can of a simply molecular universe, and a pessimist world, and an unappeasable battle of life—it will require another sort of Apostolate, and would make such a difference in the studies which it is reasonable to pursue, that it might be wisest for us to disband, and let the new Future preach its own gospel, and devise, if it can, the means of making the tidings "*glad*". . . . . I venture to affirm that the essence of Religion, summed up in the three assumptions already enumerated, is independent of any possible results of the natural sciences,

and stands fast through the various readings of the Genesis of things.

Religion as Affected by Modern Materialism.

. . . Look at the sacred poetry and recorded devotion of Christendom: how many lines of it would have any meaning left, if the conditions of conscious relationship and immediate converse between the human and the Divine Mind were withdrawn? And wherever the sense of these conditions has been enfeebled, through superficial "rationalism" or ethical self-confidence, "religious sterility" has followed. To its inner essence, thus tested by positive experience, Religion will remain constant, taking little notice of either scientific forbearance or critical management; and, though left, perhaps, by temporary desertion to nourish its life in comparative silence and retirement, certain to be heard, when it emerges, still speaking in the same simple tones, and breathing the old affections of personal love, and trust, and aspiration.

Modern Materialism.

A Hopeful Change.

Our days witness a recoil from the extreme inwardness of our forefathers' religion; human affections warm us more; human duties are nobler in our view; social interests are of deeper moment; and the whole scene of man's visible life, no longer the mere vestibule of an invisible futurity, has a worth and dignity of its own, which philanthropy delights to honor, and only fanaticism can despise. For my own part, I think the change a sign of nature's restorative power, and see in it the stirrings of new health; even though partially brought about by temporary scepticism, I cannot deplore it, for it shows that the conscience cannot go on living in a pretense, but, in retreating from things of which it doubts, gets its foot upon duties which it knows. In this are the first beginnings of new religion to replace the old; if the divine earnestness within us only shifts and does not die, it matters little what becomes of our mere theology; and deep-hearted practical faithfulness is not separable long from true-thoughted practical faith.

Endeavors, S. 17.

False and True Charity in Religion.

There is a charity, as well as a zeal, which is "not according to knowledge", and on which, therefore, no reliance can be placed for permanently abating the divisions and harmonizing the aims of the Christian world. It is found in men of kindly temper and broad natural sense, who look right at the visible surface of life, without regard to the medium through which they see it, or the mysteries that lie behind it, and cannot imagine why so many common wants and interests — so much work to be done, and sorrow to be soothed and borne — do not make us all *one* in humane and forbearing affection. . . . For the bigotry of mere temperament, the charity of mere temperament is the appropriate check. . . But still, the differences of religious faith and feeling are beyond the handling of most accomplished good-humor. They lie very deep below the surface of thought and action. . . . To know something of the source whence we come, and find there not a fermenting chemistry, but a holy love; to draw near till the eye of the living God gleams on the uplifted face, and the communion of spirits shows that he is there; to shrink from him in sin, to seek quiet with him in sorrow, and to trust him everywhere; to gain assurance of his will, be reconciled to his affection, and hopeful of his heaven — these things are to some men indispensable necessities, without which they would esteem it better that they had never been born. It is from the depth of such natures that theology and churches arise, and if you would harmonize them when they seem discordant, you must descend into like depths; you must feel their truth ere you criticise their errors, and appreciate their difference before you can persuade them that they are one. If controversy is ever to cease, it will not be by good-natured indifference to all earnest conviction, but by a sympathy profound enough to understand it; by a charity, not of easy indulgence, but of genuine insight; by a full trust in the *under-truth* that feeds the roots of all our faiths. There is no short cut, no lazy path, to a true Christian love. It does not consist in mere reaction from sectarian rigor; in dislike of all exact beliefs; in

outcries against fanaticism and cold-hearted taste for "moderation"; in turning the blind side of the mind to all that lies beyond the secular moralities. Real charity is not negative — a simple freedom from antipathies; but positive — a reverential sympathy with what is true and fair and good in the mixed products of our humanity, and through this, a tender allowance for the rest. It is a grace of open eye. To feel charity towards a *sin*, you must understand the temptation; towards a *sorrow*, you must know its depth; towards an *erring creed*, you must appreciate its meaning and its ground.

From "A Way out of the Trinitarian Controversy", in "The Christian Reformer" for Feb., 1886.

Life and Duty.

Duty a Divine Suggestion.

The voice of Duty,—what is it, if it be *not* the suggestion of God? Is it the mandate of your own fancy, imposed upon yourself,—the mere imperative mood in the soliloquies of your own will? Not so; for were the law of your making, you might forgive its violation, and the thought that set it up might take it down; yet you feel its authority above your reach, and your boast of indifference to be a sad pretense. Is it a mere echo of men's opinions,—a deference to their arbitrary demands? Not so; for how often does it lift you above that opinion, nerve your heart to withstand the injustice of a crowd, and fight the good fight though in the forlorn hope alone! As well might you persuade me that my own eyes created the daylight, or that the sunshine was the gift of public opinion, as that the sense of right was anything but the direct illumination of God, the piercing ray of the great Orb of souls. Not more certainly does Perception teach us what is external to our senses, than Consciousness what lies beyond our personality; and that the authority of Justice, Purity, and Truth is no manufacture of my own, but is imposed upon me by a Divine source above me, I am no less sure than that the stars are not twinklings of my vision and the thunder is no rumbling in my brain.

Hours, II., S. 14.

Duty is God Trusting us.

It is of the very essence of the sentiment of *duty* to feel that we are charged with a *trust* from God; and a trust can be devolved only by one who is *outside* of us, and knows that we have an isolated power of our own. He gives the law, for us to execute: he is there, and we are here: he leaves us a field whose tillage or whose barrenness is ours; and conscience, in every utterance of self-reproach, confesses the power of self-command. This consciousness, that he is *lord* of something, inspires a man with self-asserting energy; quickens his sense of obligation; and makes him aware, as he casts his eye over that which is committed to his charge, that he has much to answer for in the good or evil administration of this world. His sphere of *duty* is his sphere of *power;* in ruling it he holds a kingly attitude towards all that it contains; and whether it be a household,—a business,—a tenantry,—or an empire, that is given him to keep in order, it lies beneath him, subject to his will, trusting to his fidelity, and appealing to his affection.

Hours, I., S. 22.

High Hearts.

High hearts are never long without hearing some new call, some distant clarion of God, even in their dreams; and soon they are observed to break up the camp of ease, and start on some fresh march of faithful service. And, looking higher still, we find those who never wait till their moral work accumulates, and who reward resolution with no rest; with whom, therefore, the alternation is instantaneous and constant; who do the good only to see the better, and see the better only to achieve it; who are too meek for transport, too faithful for remorse, too earnest for repose; whose worship is action, and whose action ceaseless aspiration.

Endeavors, S. 24.

Magnitude of Life.

Magnitude of life stands not in mere length of days. *That* is but one of its

dimensions. . . . It is not larger time that we want, so much as the more capacious soul to flow through every pore of the little which we have. . . . To the insight and affections of a mind awake there is no end to the plenitude of things; it overcharges the hours that try to give its reckoning. . . . The Transient may be to the large soul more than the Everlasting to the little: and then whether our Time be long or short by Sun and Moon may well remain indifferent, since the life that is beyond time and nature is vivid within us.

Hours, I., S. 16.

GREAT PRINCIPLES AND SMALL DUTIES.

A soul occupied with great ideas best performs small duties; the divinest views of life penetrate most clearly into the meanest emergencies. . . . Nothing less than the majesty of God, and the powers of the world to come, can maintain the peace and sanctity of our homes, the order and serenity of our minds, the spirit of patience and tender mercy in our hearts. Then only shall we wisely economize moments when we anticipate for ourselves an eternity. . . . Then will even the merest drudgery of duty cease to humble us, when we transfigure it by the glory of our own spirit.

Endeavors, S. 3.

PETTY PRINCIPLES AND SMALL AFFAIRS.

There are men voluntarily delivered over to the work of mere livelihood and gain,—men who, without the sad necessities and redeeming inspiration of affection, dwarf their whole nature to the scale of retail trade; who, instead of withstanding by a noble spirit the littleness of life, fall into it with glee and relish. . . . To such a man all the depth and beauty of life are closed. . . . There is no hell so far from God, no exile so total, as the cares of sordid self-interest. . . . Friends, there is nothing degrading in the humblest and the hardest fate; nothing much nobler in this world than a meek true soul struggling against the narrow bounds of the sphere assigned it, and faithful to cherish the light of God in the inglorious darkness of a bitter lot. But to find the smallness of affairs a relief from any higher strain, to hug the degradation and make ourselves at home with it, to plead it in excuse for the unresisting meanness of our nature, to preach from its low platform a crusade of blind unbelief against the visions of prophets and the breathings of the devout,—this is a direct betrayal of the post of life, and treason against the holy Providence of all.

Hours, I., S. 18.

ONE'S LOT.

The souls that would really be richer in duty in some new position, are precisely those who borrow no excuses from the old one; who even esteem it full of privileges, plenteous in occasions of good, frequent in divine appeals, which they chide their graceless and unloving temper for not heeding more. Wretched and barren is the discontent that quarrels with its tools instead of with its skill; and by criticising Providence manages to keep up complacency with self. How gentle should we be, if we were not provoked; how pious, if we were not busy; the sick would be patient, only he is not in health; the obscure would do great things, only he is not conspicuous!

Of nothing may we be more sure than this; that, if we cannot sanctify our present lot, we could sanctify no other. Our heaven and our Almighty Father are there or nowhere. The obstructions of that lot are given for us to heave away by the concurrent touch of a holy spirit and labor of strenuous will; its gloom for us to tint with some celestial light; its mysteries are for our worship; its sorrows for our trust; its perils for our courage; its temptations for our faith. Soldiers of the Cross, it is not for us but for our Leader and our Lord, to choose the field; it is ours, taking the station which he assigns, to make it the field of truth and honor, though it be the field of death.

Endeavors, S. 27.

SELF-MASTERY.

When appetite has the keenest edge, it must be wielded, like a dangerous weapon, with the most absolute mastery. When the nerves quiver with irritable propensity, the will must lay a tranquillizing hand upon their trembling, forbid the lips to open but for quiet words, and

compel the heart to live by the placid faith of happier hours. When coward inclination recoils from the austere simplicity of duty, shrinks from the hardness of its strife, grows sensitive to the voices of derision, and obtuse to the whisperings of God, then inclination must be punished as a treacherous and wicked counsellor, and all that it forbade be undertaken at any cost. And when the proud, self-justifying thought would refuse to confess, and double the past wrong by shutting it up in sullenness instead of opening it out in secret shame; we must instantly, by an act of self-sacrificing will, invoke the Holiest to witness our impenitence, and humble ourselves within that presence to which our pitiable disguises are of no avail. And if ever a sad, distrustful mind, producing timid and wavering steps, comes over us, and life appears too vain and death too awful a thing, it were false in us to submit to such delusion, and listen to such monotony of strain; and we must force ourselves upon the wing away,—fly to the hills of high faith where dwelleth our help,—lose ourselves in the forests of our deepest worship, where blessed birds will sing the songs of heaven to our weary hearts.

Hours, II., S. 26.

THE NOBILITY IMPOSED BY LOVE.

To approve a being as good is to acknowledge a claim to become like him: and the claim implies desire; and the desire pushes itself into tendency. I know not indeed a more serious thing than the responsibility thus incurred by all human affection. Only think of this: whoever loves you is growing like you! neither you nor he can hinder it, unless at the cost of alienation. Is the resemblance worth creating? should you be pleased to see in your own friend another self? would he appear to you with an added light of excellence, or with a duller shade as of disappointment and saddened hope? O, if you are not a desolate being in this world, if you are grateful for but one creature's love, if a child's trust or a parent's shelter, a sister's pride or a brother's manly joy, rests upon you, rise to the height of so pure a blessing; reverence the sanctity of those dear souls: drag them not down by the very embrace with which they cling to you; but, in requital of their faithful cares, strive, if it be possible, to lift them to a mood they will rejoice to reach, and through their gentleness secure their consecration.

Hours, I., S. 23.

MEUM AND TUUM.

In a society so engrossed as ours by ideas connected with property, so eternally dwelling on the distinction of *meum* and *tuum*, men naturally learn to think and speak of all things in the language belonging to this relation. . . . And if ever a gentle remonstrance is insinuated, how instantly does the vulgar and ignorant feeling leap forth, "And may I not do what I like with my own?" No, you may not, unless your liking and your duty are in happy accordance. Morally you are as much bound to distribute your own wealth wisely, as to abstain from touching another man's; bound by the very same fundamental reasons, which forbid the privation of human enjoyment no less than the creation of human misery. As large a portion of well-being may be sacrificed by an act of wilful extravagance as by the commission of a dishonesty: and were it of a nature to be definable by law, would merit as severe a punishment. Shall any thing then deter us from saying that such self-indulgence is a thief?

Endeavors, S. 8.

HUMAN BROTHERHOOD.

The ease of ancient condescension is gone; the graceful recognition of human brotherhood is not attained. Let the mind emancipate itself from that debasing valuation of a human being which the mere sentiments of property would dictate; trust itself, with high faith, to the equalizing spirit of Christian piety and hope; and in paying, to all, the reverence due to an immortal, it will attain to the freedom and power of a divine love,—it will speak to sorrow with the voice of another Christ, and restore his holiest miracles of mercy. . . Between the Christian faith teaching the Fatherhood of God and the Immortality of men,—between this and the degradation of large portions of the human family

—there is an irreconcilable variance, an internecine war, to be interrupted by no parley, and mitigated by no quarter; and if faith gives up its aggression on the evil, the evil must destroy the faith. . . .

O child of my Father, wounded, bleeding, and worn by inward woes, turn not thy face away; let me lift thee from thy bed of rock, and stretch thee on the green sod of a pure affection; for am I not thy brother, stricken in thy stripes, and healed in thy rest?

Endeavors, SS. 18. 19. 20.

Immortal Life.

Eternity Present.

We love to be spoken to in tones from the borders of the infinite, and feel them to have a native sound. Carrying in ourselves secret relationships with universal space and unbeginning time through Him that fills them both and lives in us, we know the tidings which come furthest from them to be nearest to us: they remind us of our augustest kindred: they free us from our momentary prison: they show us the white sail, they breathe on us with the very wind, that shall take us out of exile. Their awful fascination bespeaks a nature mysteriously blending in its affections the finite and the infinite, and standing on the confines of both. . . . On every side, the relation of our life to the supernatural which penetrates and enfolds it, betrays itself in our consciousness. The intellect, which seeks to transcend the finite in space and time and truth; the conscience, which owns the infinite in duty and stays itself on the infinite in love; indicate the scale of our affinities, and attest a nature that liveth not by bread alone, but by every Word of communion with God. Moulded of perishable and imperishable elements, we sink and rise, we sleep and wake, we faint and struggle on; toiling outwardly for transitory wants, pining inwardly with everlasting thirst. Be it not in blind unconsciousness that we carry in us the seal of the Eternal. . . . Shall the years sweep by and take from us all that is mortal, without waking the immortal life within us from the winter in which it sleeps? Shall we wait to die into the surprise of God, instead of taking his dear and solemn converse now and for ever? Shall we dream of a future eternity, and be blind to that which surrounds us every instant,—which brings its judgments to our conscience, its present God to our trust, its mighty company of saints to our affection?

Hours, I., S. 15.

The Christian Time-View.

The difference between the ancient and modern world is this: that in the one the great reality of being was *now;* in the other it is *yet to come.* If you would witness a scene characteristic of the popular life of old, you must go to the amphitheatre of Rome, mingle with its eighty thousand spectators, and watch the eager faces of senators and people. Observe how the masters of the world spend the wealth of conquest, and indulge the pride of power, . . . and you have an idea of that imperial people, with their passionate living for the moment, which the gospel found in occupation of the world. And if you would fix in your thought an image of the popular mind of Christendom, I know not that you could do better than go at sunrise with the throng of toiling men to the hillside where Whitefield or Wesley is about to preach. Hear what a great heart of reality in that hymn that swells upon the morning air,—a prophet's strain upon a people's lips! See the rugged hands of labor, clasped and trembling, wrestling with the Unseen in prayer! Observe the uplifted faces, deep-lined with hardship and with guilt, streaming now with honest tears, and flushed with earnest shame, as the man of God awakes the life within, and tells of him that bare for us the stripe and cross, and offers the holiest spirit to the humblest lot, and tears away the veil of sense from the glad and awful gates of heaven and hell. Go to these people's homes, and observe the decent tastes, the sense of domestic obligations, the care for childhood, the desire of instruction, the neighborly kindness, the conscientious self-respect; and say, whether the sacred

image of duty does not live within those minds: whether *holiness* has not taken the place of *pleasure* in their idea of life: whether for them too the toils of nature are not lightened by some eternal hope, and their burden carried by some angel of love, and the strife of necessity turned into the service of God. The present tyrannizes over their character no more, subdued by a future infinitely great: and hardly though they lie upon the rock of this world, they can live the life of faith; and while the hand plies the tools of earth, keep a spirit open to the skies.

Endeavors, S. 38.

GREAT HOPES FOR GREAT SOULS.

The great essential to this belief is a sufficiently elevated estimate of human nature; no man will ever deny its immortality who has a deep impression of its capacity for so great a destiny.

Studies, p. 197.

In proportion as our nature rises in its nobleness, does it realize its immortality. As it retires from animal grossness, from selfish meanness, from pitiable ignorance or sordid neglect,—as it opens forth into its true intellectual and moral glory,—do its doubts disperse, its affections aspire: the veil is lifted up from the future, the darkness breaks away, and the spirit walks in dignity within the paradise of God's eternity. . . . The affinities of this doctrine are with the loftiest parts of our nature; and in our trust in it we ally ourselves with the choicest spirits of our race.

Endeavors, S. 26.

WHOM ARE WE TO BELIEVE?

If the celestial hope be a delusion, we plainly see *who* are the mistaken. Not the mean and grovelling souls, who never reached to so great a thought; not the drowsy and easy natures, who are content with the sleep of sense through life, and the sleep of darkness ever after; not the selfish and pinched of conscience, of small thought and smaller love;—no, these in such case are right, and the universe *is* on their miserable scale. The deceived are the great and holy, whom all men, aye these very insignificants themselves, revere; the men who have lived for something better than their own happiness, and spent themselves in the race, or fallen at the altar, of human good;—Paul, with his mighty and conquering courage; yes, Christ himself, who vainly sobbed his spirit to rest on his Father's imaginary love, and without result commended his soul to the Being whom he fancied himself to reveal. The self-sacrifice of Calvary was but a tragic and barren mistake; for Heaven disowns the godlike prophet of Nazareth and takes part with those who scoffed at him and would have him die; and is insensible to the divine fitness which even men have felt, when they recorded the supposed fact, or invented the beautiful fiction, of Christ's ascension. Whom are we to revere, and what can we believe, if the inspirations of the highest of created natures are but cunningly devised fables?

But it is not so; and no one who has found true guidance of heart from these noblest sons of Heaven, will fear to stake his futurity, and the immortal life of his departed friends on their vaticinations. *These*, of all things granted to our ignorance, are assuredly most like the hidden realities of God; which may be greater, but will not be less, than prophets and seers have foretold, and even our own souls, when gifted with highest and clearest vision, discern as truths not doubtful or far off. In this hope let us trust, and be true to the toils of life which it ennobles and cheers.

Endeavors, S. 12.

CONSUMED!

How is it possible to study deeply the lot of the great majority of men;—to see them ground down by toil; spending their years in bare self-continuation, and ending life without tasting of its fruits; filled to satiety with labor and starved to death within the mind;—how is it possible to see so much noble capability wasted, so much true blessedness lost, so many, first created a little lower than the angels, and then forced nearly to a level with the brutes,—without providing in our thoughts a future vindication of the Creator,—a life in which the fearful inequality will be compensated, and the suspended good at length born?

Endeavors, S. 26.

They that have borne their witness for

God in evil times, that have gone with his sanctities into penury and exile, that have had their tongue plucked out with a hot iron rather than shape it to a lie, —have they indeed been swept away by the scorn of the wicked and the fool, never to reappear and lift up their heads into the light?

Hours, II., S. 20.

Put the question in conjunction with any overwhelming calamity, which perceptibly plunges into silence a multitude of souls; like the dreadful destruction just announced from the Western world, of a ship freighted with priceless lives, with the wealth of homes, the hopes of the oppressed, the lights of nations. . . . And does any one believe that this freight of transcendent worth,—all this sorrow, and thought, and hope, and moral greatness, and pure affection, were *burnt*, and went out with flame and cotton-smoke? Sooner would I believe that the fire consumed the less everlasting stars!

Endeavors, S. 12.

GOD'S COLONISTS.

While we poor wayfarers still toil, with hot and bleeding feet, along the highway and the dust of life, our companions have but mounted the divergent path, to explore the more sacred streams, and visit the diviner vales, and wander amid the everlasting Alps, of God's upper province of creation. . . And so we keep up the courage of our hearts, and refresh ourselves with the memories of love, and travel forward in the ways of duty with less weary step, feeling ever for the hand of God, and listening for the domestic voices of the immortals whose happy welcome waits us. Death, in short, under the Christian aspect, is but God's method of colonization; the transition from this mother-country of our race to the fairer and newer world of our emigration.

Endeavors, S. 39.

"THE LIGHTS ALMOST EXTINGUISHED."

When in the sanctuary of the affections the lights are almost extinguished, and those that remain only enable us to read the inscriptions on the multitude of surrounding tombs; when, in fact, the solitude would be, not to depart, but to remain,—we may well and naturally feel that it is time to go, and our prayer may be to be speedily withdrawn to the place of rest. For now, whatever may be the indistinctness of the future, the groups of friendship are there; they make the best part of its scenery; and wherever they are is a shelter and a home. However strange to us the colony may be in which they dwell, if, as we cross the deeps of death, their visionary forms shall crowd the shore, and people the hills of that unvisited abode, it will be to us "a better country, even a heavenly."

Endeavors, S. 25.

THE OLD MAN RECOLLECTING.

When the old man incessantly reverts to years that had receded into the far distance, and finds scenes that had appeared to vanish come back even from his boyhood and stand around him with preternatural distinctness, when ancient snatches of life's melodies thrill through his dreams, and the faces of early friends look in upon him often, the preparation is significant. He is gathering his witnesses together, making ready the theatre of trial, and collecting the audience for judgment. These are they that were with him in his manifold temptations, and can tell him of his victory or his fall; that exercised such spirit of duty as was in him; whom his selfishness injured, or his fidelity blessed. Remembrance has broken the seals of its tombs; its sainted dead come forth at the trump of God within the soul, and declare the tribunal set.

Endeavors, S. 21.

THE SOUL'S FORECAST OF RETRIBUTION.

It can scarcely be that there is not *something* in the great world to come corresponding to the immeasurable difference which reveals itself in our forecasting souls between holiness and guilt. By what methods this felt difference will however declare and justify itself, it were vain to surmise; and least of all can we lay any stress on the mythological pictures to which, in the intensity of their spiritual convictions, prophetic men have had recourse as symbols of the truth they would convey, and the interval they desired to mark. Whether it be Plato's roaring shaft, with its thorny sides and

police of fiends, through which the dead must pass, or Christ's undying worm and unquenchable fire, it were childish to take these images for more than solemn hints of an undefinable reality; or to imagine that, by dissipating them, you get rid of the penalties of sin. . . . For the *form* in which this ancient faith,—of the immeasurable difference between guilt and goodness,—has been embodied, I do not plead. To say that the two are *eternally* separate, and that there is no transit from the one to the other, is an hyperbole of enthusiasm, which even contradicts the very moral law it is intended to emphasize: for unless it is possible for character to rise and fall and so change places, the world is under Fate instead of Righteousness. We cannot translate an intense contrast of *quality* into any *quantitative* infinitude. Time and guilt are incommensurable things; and no cycles of the one can be fitted to the relations of the other. But the language which seems to do so springs from a deep insight, and symbolizes a solemn truth; that the retributions of God are very awful; that they are not to be judged by our skill in putting them off or blindfolding ourselves to them; and that their true interpretation is to be sought in our own unperverted remorse; that a really holy mind, in its most sunny hours of trust, will never quite forget their shadow; and whilst there is always "forgiveness with God," it is "that he may be feared."

Hours, II., S. 10.

THE FIRELESS HELL. BEYOND IT, RESTORATION.

That other life we take to be a scene for the mind's ampler and ampler development, apart from those animal and selfish elements which now deform and degrade it by their excess. And this alone, if there were nothing else, would render it a life of awful retribution. For to the wicked, what is this loss of "the natural man," but total bereavement and utter death of joy?—what to the good but a glad and sacred birth? . . . And yet precisely because we believe in Retribution, do we trust in Restoration. The very abhorrence with which a man's better mind ever looks upon his worse, while it inflicts his punishment, begins his cure; and we can never allow that God will suspend this natural law impressed by himself on our spiritual constitution, merely in order to stop the process of moral recovery, and specially enable him to maintain the eternity of torment and sin. And, so, beyond the dark close of life, rise before us the awful contrasts of retribution; and in the farther distance, the dim but glorious vision of a purified, redeemed, and progressive universe of souls.

Studies, p. 197.

LOVE CASTING OUT THE FEAR OF HELL.

Such as the man is, such is his belief; and the faith to which he bears his testimony, testifies in return of him. . . . Nor need you try to persuade me that a soul, pure, tender, and merciful, has any real faith in a relentless hell, where the cry of penitence can avail no more. Such things may stand written in creeds which those gentle lips may still repeat; but let the heretic friend or son die away from her arms, and she will find some divine excuse for keeping the torment far away. The eye of love is too clear and single, to allow of the light that is in it becoming so dread a darkness as that impossible faith.

Endeavors, S. 40.

NO OUTCASTS.

Christ will not remain at the head of the "whole family", if its forlorn and outcast members are simply put away in selfish shame, and no gentle care is spent to smooth the pathway of return. . . . Whoever will take to heart how the same human burthen is laid on all, and the divine relief so nobly used by some is for a while so sadly missed by more; how much resemblance lurks in every difference between man and man; how small a space may often separate the decline into grievious failure, and the ascent into glorious success; must surely feel the yearnings of a fraternal heart toward all who have borne the earthly mission; must look on the apparition and disappearance of generation after generation on this scene with an almost domestic regret and household pity for his kind; consoled and elevated by the trust, that men and nations who have performed the parts of shame and sorrow here, are trained to nobler and more natural offices elsewhere.

Endeavors, S. 39.

JESUS THE DIVINE FLOWER OF HUMANITY.

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, God hath presented to us simply in his inspired humanity. . . . We accept,—not indeed his body, not the struggles of his sensitive nature, not the travail of his soul, but his purity, his tenderness, his absolute devotion to the great idea of right, his patient and compassionate warfare against misery and guilt, as the most distinct and beautiful expression of the Divine Mind. The peculiar office of Christ is to supply a new *moral* image of Providence; and everything therefore except the *moral* complexion of his mind, we leave behind as human and historical merely, and apply to no religious use.

(1839.) *Liverpool Lectures, No.* 5.

The mighty spirits of our race are as the lyric thoughts of God that drop and breathe from his almighty solitude;—transient chords flying forth from the strings as his solemn hand wanders over the possibilities of beauty. One only finished expression of his mind, one entire symmetric strain, has fallen upon our world. In Christ we have the overflowing Word, the deep and beautiful soliloquy, of the Most High; not his message and his argument,—for in that there were no Religion,—but the very poetry of God, which could not have been told us face to face, but only cast in meditation upon the silence of history. Not more certainly do we discern in the writings of Shakspeare the greatest manifestation of human genius, than in the reality of Christ the highest expression of the Divine. Not more clearly does the worship of the saintly soul, breathing through its window opened to the midnight, betray the secrets of its affections, —than the mind of Jesus of Nazareth reveals the perfect thought and inmost love of the All-ruling God.

(*About* 1845.) *Endeavors, S.* 43.

From the person of Jesus . . . everything *official*, attached to him by evangelists or divines, has fallen away . . . The pomp of royal lineage and fulfilled prediction, the prerogatives of King, of Priest, of Judge, the Advent with retinue of angels on the clouds of heaven, are to us mere deforming investitures, misplaced like court-dresses on "the spirits of the just"; and he is simply the Divine flower of humanity, blossoming after ages of spiritual growth,—the realized possibility of life in God. And if he is *this*, he has no consciously exceptional part to play, but only to *be* what he is, to follow the momentary love, to do and say what the hour may bring, to be quiet under the sorrows which pity and purity incur, and die away in the prayer of inextinguishable trust. And, to see him thus, we go to his native fields and the village homes of Galilee, and the roads of Samaria, and the streets and courts of Jerusalem, where the griefs and wrongs of his time bruised him and brought out the sublime fragrance of his spirit. All that has been added to that real historic scene,—the angels that hang around his birth, and the fiend that tempted his youth; the dignities that await his future, —the throne, the trumpet, the great assize, the bar of judgment; with all the apocalyptic splendors and terrors that ensue, Hades and the Crystal sea, Paradise and the Infernal gulf; nay, the very boundary walls of the Kosmic panorama that contains these things,—have for us utterly melted away, and left us amid the infinite space and the silent stars. . . .

Where then do we stand, on the dissolution of these scenic dreams? Is their fading away a mere loss, abandoning us to a desolate negation? When you think most reverently of Christ, when you most lose yourself in God, when you are clearest in immortal hope, do you wish them back again? Would they overfill, or would they disappoint, the measures of your spirit in such hours? . . . It is only in the rudimentary stages of piety that men crave tangible objects or feigned pictures on which to fasten their wonder and veneration. The perennial fountains of Religion lie in the deepest wells of our nature, in the primary essence of the Reason and Moral consciousness . . . and when we are called of God to plunge and float in his illimitable sea, what can be more miserable than forthwith to

escape and land on some broken spar of mythology or dogma?

(1881.) *Loss and Gain in Recent Theology.*

CHRIST'S AUTHORITY—OR AUTHORITY FOR HIM?

And where, after all, is the ultimate "authority" of our religion to be found? Who will show us the real seat of the "primitive Christianity" of which all disciples are in quest? Shall we take the first four centuries, and interpret the concurrent tones of their voices into the certain oracle of God? Not so, you say; for the writers of that period were full of the errors prevailing around them: and they themselves refer us to an anterior generation, as imparting legitimacy to the doctrines which they teach. Shall we go, then, to that earlier generation, and abide by the words of the Apostolic age? Scarcely this either, you will say; for the marks are too plain that there is no unerring certainty here: the Apostles themselves were not without their differences; and even their unanimity could mistake, for they confessedly taught the near approach of the end of the world. They, too, still refer us upward, and take everything from Christ. To Christ, then, let us go. Wherein resides the "authority" in him which we are to accept as "final"? Shall we say,—in his reported *words* wherever found;—his statements are conclusive, and exempt from doubt? Impossible! Who can affirm that he had, and that he uttered, no ideas imbibed from his age, and obsolete when that age was gone; that he grew up to manhood in the Galilean province without a sentiment, an expectation, native to time and place; or that he disrobed himself of his whole natural mind from the instant of his baptism; that he did not discern evil spirits in the poor patients that came to him, and so misinterpret his own miracles; that he raised no hopes in others of sitting on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel; of drinking with him of the fruit of the vine at his table in his kingdom; and of his own return to fulfil all these things "within that generation"? Will any one plainly say, with these things before him, that Jesus was infallible, and that in his spoken language we have a standard of doctrinal truth? And if error was possible, who will give us an *external* test by which we may know the region of its absence and of its presence? for, without this, to talk of his words being a "rule of faith" is a delusion or a pretence. But why this heathenish craving for an "oracle," turning the Galilean hills into a Delphi, Jesus into a Pythoness and degrading the Gospels into Sibylline books? Did Christ ask for this blind, implicit trust? Did he wish his disciples to believe his word, because it was true,—or the truth, because it was his word? Nay, did not *he* also refer us to something higher, and hint at an authority needful to authorize his own? Thither then we must retreat, if indeed we would find "Primitive Christianity.". . .

It will not be questioned that the Inspiration of Jesus was *within* the soul: by the powers that dwelt there, he knew the thoughts to be divine and holy as they dropped on his meditations: and the authorizing point of all his treasures of heavenly truth and grace dwelt in his Reason, Conscience, and Faith. Here, then, is the fountain of all, the primitive seat of inspiration, the true religion of Christ,—that which he *felt and followed*, not that which he *spake and led.* And those are the most genuine disciples, who stand with him at the same spring; who are ready for the same trust; and can disengage themselves from tradition, pretense, and fear, at the bidding of the same source of Inspiration.

(1846.) *Miscellanies*, 210–212.

"ALL SOULS THAT STRUGGLE AND ASPIRE."

Among all natures that can speak together of duty and righteousness, and exchange ideas of the right and wrong, there must prevail one system of values, one metrical notation; failing this, there could be no commerce of thought or sentiment. Hence we can neither deny to faithful, heroic, and holy men, to a Socrates, a Marcus Aurelius, a Blaise Pascal, an approach to Christ upon the same line, nor claim for him any pre-eminence that removes them from his fellowship. But neither can we speak otherwise of God himself. He also, with all the infinitude of his perfections, is still but the

Father of spirits, and on the side of moral goodness differing from his children only in degree: however vast the interval, it is one on which movement never ceases to be possible: the obedience of the little child that tells the truth or keeps his word and suffers, is akin to the fidelity of God who will not break his promise to the universe. In the world of character there is no such problem as that about the "origin of species". All minds that own a better and a worse are fellow-denizens of the same City of God, severed by no antipathies of race or impassable barriers of rank; but inwardly conscious of the same authority and revering the same call; knit together in love, in proportion as they draw nearer to the beauty of holiness; and lifted at last into fellowship with the Supreme Perfection.

(1879.) *Hours, II., S.* 15.

The Bible.

As Bridge and Bond of Human Fellowship.

Apart from all questions of inspiration, there is no grander agent than the Bible in this world. It has opened the devout and fervid East to the wonder and affection of the severer West. It has made old Egypt and Assyria more familiar to Christendom than its own lands; and to our people at large the Pharaohs are less strange than the Plantagenets, and Abraham is more distinct than Alfred. The Hebrew prophet finds himself in the presence of the English tradesman, or domesticated in the Scotch village; and is better understood when he speaks of Jordan, than the poet at home who celebrates the Greta or the Yarrow. Scenes of beauty, pictures of life, rise on the people's thought across the interval of centuries and continents. Pity and terror, sympathy and indignation, fly over vast reaches of time, and alight on many a spot else unclaimed by our humanity, and unconsecrated by the presence of our God. It is a discipline of priceless value; securing for the general mind materials of thought and faith most rich and varied; and breaking that servile sleep of custom, which is the worst foe of true belief and noble hope.

Endeavors, S. 41.

The True Secret of Bible Interpretation.

The office of the understanding in the interpretation of the Scriptures is, to abandon itself freely to the impression which they produce. That the impression may have the greatest chance of being correct, two conditions are needful; that the mind be charged with ancient knowledge, and emptied of modern theories. We must become penetrated with the sentiments of the age of Christ; feel the impatient expectation of those who were looking for the consolation of Israel; burn with hope at every new rumor of the Deliverer, and despond again as the rumor dies away. We must go forth to labor in the fields of Galilee, and overhear the peasants talk of the new prophet of Nazareth: how some are elated by the thought that their despised district had, perhaps, given birth to the Messiah, while others plead against this meek claimant the splendor of the royal race of Judah; and provincial vanity gives way to national ambition. We must tremble with the superstition that turned madness into an incarnate fiend, and treated the diseases of this upper world as stray terrors escaped from the invisible abyss. . . . The localities, the passions, the controversies, the forms of social life in that city of priests, must be familiar to us as household memories. . . . We must share the party feelings of the times, . . . and lose the sympathies of the present in the vivid creations of the past. . . . It is only in proportion as the mind is disrobed of all preconceived notions, that it enjoys the possibility of receiving a correct impression from the records of Christianity. . . . There must be no reservation or restriction in the openness of our minds to the impressions of the work we study; there must be no tacit exclusion of certain meanings as impossible; the Calvinist must not turn away from any system of ideas because it is heterodox, nor the Unitarian from any because it is not rational. The sole task of the interpreter is to reach the meaning of the author.

Rationale of Religious Inquiry, 4th Edition, p. 57.

INFALLIBLE—OR INCREDIBLE ?

But the more important question remains. Suppose that we have fixed on our own interpretation; that we have reached, as far as we can ascertain, the original ideas of the sacred authors; *how are we to treat them?* You will say, perhaps, that will depend on the view which you take of the writer's mission and authority. If they were upright and able witnesses of Christ, but *not exempt from the possibility of error*, their notions cannot be received as oracles, but must be judged of by their intrinsic evidence and merits. If you are satisfied that they were inspired men, you must receive their announcements as authoritative; . . You have no further occasion, no longer any right, to sift their evidence. . . Whatever their seeming improbability, or even absurdity, you may not hesitate; reasoning is set aside, its impression must be swept away by the overpowering reverence for revelation. With the internal character of the communication you have no concern. . When a human judgment is at variance with a divine certainty, there is no doubt which must give way.

This argument has been almost universally held to be satisfactory. Its force has been admitted by Unitarian no less than by orthodox Christians; and in accordance with it, the former have repeatedly said, if we could find the doctrines of the Trinity and the Atonement and everlasting torments, in the Scriptures, we should believe them.

For my own part I confess myself unable to adopt this language. Not that I entertain any hesitation in pronouncing these notions, in the form in which they now exist, to be unscriptural, or doubt the importance of relieving the Christian records of all responsibility for them. But I am prepared to maintain, that if they were in the Bible, they would still be incredible; that the intrinsic evidence against a doctrine may be such as to baffle all the powers of external proof.

(1845.) *Rationale of Religious Inquiry*, p. 61.

THE UNIVERSE OF PAUL AND THAT OF HERSCHEL.

Compare the picture of the universe in the imagination of a Herschel, a Lyell, a Darwin, with the same scene as disposed in the thought of Isaiah, of Paul, of Chrysostom: look at the celestial architecture of the Apocalypse, and then at what the telescope reveals: think what is implied in the mere conception of a "Solar system", and the changed classification from "Heaven and Earth" to "Suns and Planets", remember that with the disappearance of the supernal halls from the sky, and of the abyss with its infernal chains from the subterraneous strata, a host of inhabitants are dislodged, and fallen angels and imprisoned spirits and tormenting fiends lose themselves in the cold void: and can you wonder, that, on the one hand, Augustine would hear nothing of antipodes, or Rome of the Copernican idea, or the Dean of York of the geological, or, on the other, that those who had dissolved the fictitious palace of the Most High should suppose they had discovered a mere darkness or a blank within? . . . Larger space, longer time, slower movement, finer gradation, than we had dreamed of, have everywhere to be admitted. Among objects, nothing isolated; in events, nothing sudden; a web of infinitely extended relations, in which *this* is part of the same mesh with *that;* a history of infinitely divisible changes, in which to-day is born of yesterday, and the shifting shadows glide and never leap;—these are the new aspects under which modern knowledge presents the system of the world.

Essays, Phil. and Theol., I., p. 174-6

SCRIPTURE EXHALING INTO POETRY

The New Testament will doubtless experience what has already happened to the Old; elements and scenery in it which are gradually withdrawn from literal acceptance and authoritative use, will pass into symbols of some truth and sanctity beyond themselves, and help the imagination to give form and color to spiritual things; and as the Egyptian bondage, the desert march, the water from the rock, the promised land, the courts of Zion, the holy of holies, have been lifted into emblems of the pilgrimage of man and the providence of God; so the baptismal dove, the temptation, the calming of the storm, the transfiguration, the Christ crucified, the Christ glorified, notwith-

standing inequalities in their historical certainty, will retain their significance for the inward life, painting the crises of its drama and the transcendency of its victory. More and more of the modern Christian hymns . . . do but touch for a moment the ground of historical incident, and pass on at once to some spiritual counterpart which is the real theme of the poet's inspiration. This gradual expansion of the original sources of Christian conception to embrace the new thought and larger sentiment which they themselves have been instrumental in creating, is the natural method of evolving the future from the past.

Hymns of Praise and Prayer, p. xiii.

UNWRITTEN ORACLES, FRESHENING GOSPELS.

The Bible cannot be applied, as a standard of theological truth and moral duty, in the way which prevailed two generations ago. . . . The infallible inspiration which would have made it virtually all the work of one mind, it nowhere claims or evinces. And the assumed prophetic foresight pervading the writings from the beginning to the end disappears when they are rightly understood. The remains of the Hebrew literature which form the Old Testament are for the most part collections by unknown editors from the productions of unknown hands; in the highest degree interesting as early memorials of the most enduring race and the sublimest religion in the world; but by their discrepancies of tradition and history, their unfulfilled prophecies, their variances of conception in regard to human life and things Divine, bidding defiance to the ingenuity of harmonists. . . .

Are we then to despair of our office, because what was once used as a Divine Text-book has become a human literature? On the contrary, I claim it as a noble though severe advantage that we are driven from words to realities, and must sink right home to the inward springs of religion in our nature and experience. . It is the *unwritten* oracles of God that have most deeply stirred the hearts of the devout,—the beauty of the heavens and the earth, the secret heroism of duty, the mystery of sorrow, the solemnity of death, and Scripture itself is only so far the "Word of God" as it truly plants us face to face with these, his *silences*. . . . Our attitude towards the Scriptures thus becomes the same which has long been familiar to the Society of Friends; simply assuming that the Spirit of God, which in the old time wrought their elements of sanctity into the pages of the Bible, lives and operates forever in the human soul, renewing the light of Divine truth and kindling eternal aspirations: so that the day of Pentecost is never past, and there is still a tongue of fire for every evangelist.

(1881.) *Loss and Gain in Recent Theology.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

NICENE AND ATHANASIAN CREEDS—TODAY!

It is bad enough that the (English) Church should have inherited her chief formulas of belief from such an age and such a reign as that of Constantine; a reign hideous with guilt; an age so surrendered to depraved morals and misdirected intellect, that, if ever there could be in Christendom an incapacity for discerning spiritual truth, it must have been then. But to make such a time the rule for all others,—to dignify by the name of "the Catholic faith" the propositions which emerged from its wranglings, by outvoting or outreaching the rest; to scorn, in comparison, the light of recent thought, and constrain the modern Englishman to put back the index of his Christian consciousness to the hour when Athanasius triumphed,—is a weak rebellion against providential tendencies, and an irreligious scepticism of God's perpetual inspiration.

Miscellanies, p. 320

We would ask any clergyman (of the Church of England) who reads the Athanasian Creed, How can you transact your daily affairs with any peace of mind? Your coat was made by a man who doubts the co-eternity, your grocer thinks the Holy Ghost created; you pay your rent to

a landlord who confounds the persons; and your fishmonger divides the substance. If you found any of these with his house on fire, you would not think it a time for prosecuting your business; you see him in a greater peril, and you coolly inquire about sugars, or discuss the choice of salmon! The misfortune is, this doctrine is in some degree protected by its own monstrous character; which takes it so sheer out of all nature, that it can scarcely be confronted with reality. . . . When we demand from men a life in simple accordance with their profession, the thing itself is so impossible that we are apt to seem unreasonable, and become charged with the very extravagance which we impute. It is, however, notorious, that a large number, even of the clergy, are fully *conscious* of their unbelief in this doctrine; and among the educated laity, the impression is general that no one, except here and there a dull curate or a pugnacious bishop, is sincere in his assent to it.

Will it not, then, be got rid of? Not a bit: the instinct of ecclesiastical cohesion, and the passion for nominal unity, will outweigh all sense of human veracity and reverence for godly simplicity; and year after year, as sure as the Athanasian festivals come round, thousands of clergymen will solemnly profess before tens of thousands of assenting people, a creed which is false to the heart of all. Depend upon it the State will wake up to a sense of right and dignity in this matter before the Church, and the honor of politicians grow sensitive to the blot, while the conscience of divines could bear a longer shame.

(1850.) *Miscellanies, p.* 314.

SENTENCES.

I am a Unitarian; . . . but the society of worshippers, of which we are only the living members, and the church erected here of which we shall be but transient tenants—these are not to be defined as Unitarian.

(*From Address at the laying of the corner-stone of his church in Liverpool*, 1848.)

To relieve the Christian life from reliance on theological articles or external rites, to save it from conflict with the knowledge and conscience of mankind, and bring it back to the essential conditions of harmony between God and man.

(*The object of the "Free Christian Union", formed by Martineau and a few like-minded persons of his own ana other Churches, in* 1868.)

There is greatness in a faith, when it can win a wide success or make rapid conquest over submissive minds. There is a higher greatness in a faith that, when God ordains, can stand up and do without success;—unmoved amid the pitiless storms of a fanatic age; with foot upon the rock of its own fidelity, and heart in the serene Infinite above the canopy of cloud and tempest.

I carry religious questions, in the last appeal, to the inward consciousness of man, whether intellectual for the interpretation of causality, or moral for the interpretation of duty.

When piety supplies the motive, and learning the means, for bewildering veracity of apprehension, two rich and noble endowments are spent in corrupting a nobler, which is the life of them both.

Could there be a roll-call of the Pessimists of our time, be they compassionate or be they cynical, there would probably be found in their ranks fewer of the mere men of society than of the mutinous deserters of Church theology.

Bibliolatry has been, and is likely long to be, the bane of Protestant Christianity.

If, being orthodox, you die at the stake, you are a martyr; if, being heretic, —why, then you are a man burnt.

Amid all our controversies, it is of moment that we should remember the moral innocence of mental error.

Disputes are seldom settled till their arguments are forgotten.

The Pharisee, it would appear, belongs to a sect never extinct; he lives immortal upon the earth; and in our day, like Simon of old, graciously condescends to ask the Lord Jesus to dine!

No inquirer can fix a direct and clear-sighted gaze towards the truth, who is

casting side-glances all the while on the prospects of his soul.

He who would not rather be damned than escape through the sufferings of innocence and sanctity is so far from the qualifications of a saint, that he has not even the magnanimity of Milton's fiends.

In virtue of the close affinity, perhaps ultimate identity, of Religion and Poetry, preaching is essentially a lyric expression of the soul, an utterance of meditation in sorrow, hope, love, and joy, from a representative of the human heart in its divine relations.

Religion is no more possible without prayer, than poetry without language, or music without atmosphere. In the dumb heart it invariably dies.

If there be any who can waft their souls to God on Vedic hymns, or toil upwards by the steps of Gentile metaphysics, far be it from me to question the efficacy of the exercise; it may possibly be as good for them as singing the Athanasian creed. But for myself, both conviction and feeling keep me close to the poetry and piety of Christendom. It is my native air, and in no other can I breathe; and wherever it passes, it so mellows the soil and feeds the roots of character, and nurtures such grace and balance of affection, that for any climate similarly rich in elements of perfect life I look in vain elsewhere.

The result of a sharp separation of the ethical from the spiritual province of life is, that both are deprived of elements indispensable to their proper culture. Our devout people are not remarkable for either clear notions or nice feelings on moral questions; while the conscientious class are apt to be dry and cold precisians, truthful, trustworthy, and humane, but so little genial, so devoid of ideality and depth, that poet or prophet is struck dumb before their face.

Nothing ever "makes for righteousness" but One who *is* righteous.

The Lord of all, the very God of our worship, is not raised by his almightiness above the range of inviolate order. With a boundless freedom of possibility, he yet commits his energy to unswerving lines, and keeps the track with an eternal patience.

What is a day, but a sample of the eternity in which we are and are to be?

We do not believe immortality because we have proved it, but we forever try to prove it because we believe it.

Knowledge is understanding by Sense; faith is understanding by Love.

Do the right, and your ideal of it grows and perfects itself. Do the wrong, and your ideal of it breaks up and vanishes.

No one can have a true idea of right, until he does it; any genuine reverence for it, till he has done it often and with cost; any peace ineffable in it, till he does it always and with alacrity.

Personal Retrospects.

Dear Friends and Brothers, if it is well, in this work of ours, to begin with the Heathen idea of perfection *and know ourselves*, it is indispensable to go on to the Christian and *forget ourselves*. Here lies the secret of spiritual power. Our own brief experience, as well as all Christian history, attests this. When I look back over the two generations that are clear to me in memory or in record, and, among the inevitable varieties of worth, notice the figures and features that survive in thought, the differences are full of pathetic lights and shades. The vain and empty are simply gone without a trace, their egoism melted into nothingness. The hard and opinionative are remembered indeed, and with homage to their integrity; but remembered with a smile, as belonging to the past; or, if more, only on account of some redeeming enthusiasm or tenderness which hinted a suppressed fire within. But the forms that are still radiant, the eyes that have

not lost their glow and are still as if near to us in the distant air, are those of loving and trustful disciples, surrendered to faithful service, and spending in it, with childlike simplicity, the gifts of genius or the affluence of culture. Your own hearts will testify that it is no mere personal accident if Channing, inspirer of my youth, and John James Tayler, the friend of my full age, live before me among the dearest and most sacred figures of my past and of my future. It is their purity of soul, their constancy in duty, their tenderness of affection, their life in God, that joins them to the train of Christ, and mingles them with the lengthening procession of the saints. Their work is in your hands: may the grace and power of their spirit be continued in your hearts!

(1881.) *Loss and Gain in Recent Theology,—closing paragraph.*

On looking back over the remembered work of four-score years, I find it all summed up in the simplest of acts,—the unreserved expression of whatever took hold of me as most true and good. In this there is no heroism: it is but "the life according to nature." To the existence of a group of churches free in their constitution and open to the laws of natural change, I owe whatever scope has been given me for study and teaching on subjects of morals and religion. It is, however, no mere personal gratitude that retains me in allegiance to their inherited principle; but a conviction that the true religious life supplies grounds of sympathy and association deeper and wiser than can be expressed by any doctrinal names or formulas; and that free play can never be given to these genuine spiritual affinities till all stipulation, direct or implied, for specified agreement in theological opinion is discarded from the bases of church union. Aware as I am that many members of the recent Conference do not unconditionally concur in this conviction, I am the more touched by an expression of approval and affection which, in their case, involves an exercise of forbearance.

Response to the greetings of the National Conference of English Unitarians on the eightieth anniversary of his birth, April 21, 1885.

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*** Published Semi-Monthly (except during July and August), by Charles H. Kerr & Co., 175 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. Ten copies or more to one address, each, 50 cts. a year. Single copy, one year, $1.00. Entered at the Chicago Post-Office as second-class matter.

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